

Subject: permit to fly a drone at Goðafoss, Gullfoss, Skógafoss, Fjallabak and Snæfellsjökull national park

The Environment Agency of Iceland has received an application from Jack Wang, dated November 24th 2022, for a permit to fly a drone within Goðafoss, Gullfoss, Skógafoss, Fjallabak and Snæfellsjökull national park.

Fjallabak is protected as a nature reserve, cf. regulation no. 354/1979. Construction work, extraction of minerals, disturbance to geological formations, vegetation and wild animal life in the protected area is prohibited. The use of unmanned aircraft (drones) within the nature reserve from 15th June – 15th September is subject to a permit from the Environment Agency of Iceland.

Gullfoss is protected as a nature reserve, cf. regulation no. 141/1979. Disturbance to geological formations, vegetation and wild animal life is prohibited. Operating an unmanned aircraft/drone within the protected area is subjected to a permit from the Environment Agency of Iceland.

Goðafoss is protected as natural monument, cf. regulation no. 1261/2011. Disturbance to vegetation, wildlife and geological formation is prohibited. Operating an unmanned aircraft/drone within the protected area is subjected to a permit from the Environment Agency of Iceland.

Skógafoss is protected as a natural monument, cf. regulation no. 477/1987. Disturbance to geological formations, vegetation and wild animal life in the protected area is prohibited. Camping overnight is only allowed in a designated campsite. This includes tents, motorhomes and campers. Photography, cinemaphotography and events that can affect visitors experience in the area are subjected to a permit from the Environment Agency of Iceland. Operating an unmanned aircraft/drone within the protected area is subjected to a permit from the Environment Agency of Iceland.

Snæfellsjökull National park is protected as a national park cf. regulation no. 935/2021. Operating an unmanned aircraft within the national park is subjected to a permit from the Environment Agency of Iceland according to art. 7 in the Regulation during nesting season.

Description of the project:

Map showing flight routes/areas and where the drone would take off and land was included in the application. Each flight will not last longer than 15 min and flight altitude is under 120 meters. Minimum flight altitude would be 30 meters. Number of employee is 1 person. The flights will take place in the period of December 11th -16th 2022.

Impact assessment:

The Environment Agency of Iceland considers the project not likely to have negative effect on nature and conservation value of the sites if conditions of the permit are followed. The project might have negative effect on other visitors experience of the sites especially where the drone takes off and lands near popular viewpoints and flight time is long. The Environment Agency considers that the negative effect can be reduced if conditions of the permit are followed and take off and landing sites located away from other visitors.

Conclusions and conditions:

After revision of the application, regulations for the sites and management plans it is concluded that no permission is needed to fly the drone in Fjallabak nature reserve and Snæfellsjökull national park in the period requested if the flight does not disturb wildlife and other visitors experience.

The Environment Agency declines the applicants request to have to drone take of from the viewpoint at Skógafoss. The drone must take off and land further away from the waterfall where there are fewer people.

The Environment Agency of Iceland hereby grants Jack Wang permission on its behalf to fly a drone within Goðafoss, Gullfoss and Skógafoss as described above on December 11th -16th 2022 on the following conditions:

- Keep this letter with you on site during the project.
- The applicant shall inform rangers in the area about their arrival and departure. This is to be done 24 hours before entering the area and again before leaving it.
- If the project dates or description changes the Environment Agency shall be notified as soon as possible.
- Applicant should always stay on authorized paths/tracks/roads.
- The applicant must follow rules of conduct that apply to the area.
- If any complications occur during the project, please contact the ranger or the Environment Agency of Iceland, tel. +354 591 2000.
- The applicant should be conscious of other guests on the sites and make sure that droneflight causes as little disturbance as possible to other visitors. If the material is meant for public viewing it must be noted in the video/subtext that permission from the Environment Agency was obtained for the droneflight.
- All disturbance to animals and wildlife is strictly prohibited.
- Off-road driving in Iceland is strictly prohibited.
- The project's staff is required to prevent all disturbance to the environment and make sure that all litter is removed from the sites.
- An unmanned aircraft should never be flown in close proximity to people. Please take precaution not to disturb people's experience, their safety or personal privacy nor the general peace of the protected areas being filmed.
- According to Icelandic law it is forbidden to fly close to cliffs where birds nest. An unmanned aircraft should never be flown near animals or birds, neither in nesting areas nor during nesting season or any other seasonal time when animals or bird habitats are considered vulnerable.
- Flight time should be kept to a minimum and flight should be avoided during the area's busiest times of the day.

- The drone must take off and land where other visitors are not present.
- If the use of unmanned aircraft causes disturbance to wildlife in the area, its use should be ceased at once.
- The conductor of the unmanned aircraft is responsible for the aircraft within the protected area. This includes taking responsibility of any possible risk of harm to people, fauna and nature and leaving no permanent marks on the site in question. Should the aircraft crash, all components from it must be collected and removed from the area.
- For safety reasons, the pilot of an unmanned aerial vehicle must wear marked clothing so that the person can be identified.
- **It is forbidden to fly drones in the canyon in front of the waterfall at Skógafoss.**
- It is forbidden to fly drones next to bird cliffs in a closer proximity than 50 meters, if birds are in the cliffs.

If the developer causes damage to nature, according to art. 87 in the Nature Conservation Act no. 60/2013, the Environment Agency of Iceland can, according to the Nature Conservation Act, f.e. order the licensee to fix damage to nature and vegetation and/or stop the project.

The Environment Agency of Iceland can according to art. 89 in the Nature Conservation Act no. 60/2013 change conditions of the permit, add new conditions or withdraw the permit in order to prevent damage to nature if environmental conditions change.

According to art 89. in the Nature Conservation Act no. 60/2013 the Environment Agency can withdraw the permit if conditions of the permit are not complied to.

Unmanned aircraft should take off and land in a safe distance from other visitors according to regulation 990/2017 on unmanned aircrafts.

The usage of a drone shall be according to regulation no. 990/2017 on the operation of remotely piloted aircraft (<https://www.icetra.is/aviation/drones/>).

Please note that according to the regulation all drones used for commercial flight need to be registered at the Icelandic Transport Authority.

Permission fee:

Environment Agency of Iceland charges a fee for processing applications for permits in protected areas based on Article 92 of Act no. 61/2013 on Nature Conservation. The fee for cinematography and/or photography is 52.600 ISK according to art. 24. b. in the agency's tariff no. 535/2015.

Supervision:

The Environment Agency will supervise the project. The supervisor will be a ranger from the Environment Agency.

Sincerely

Daníel Freyr Jónsson
advisor

Þórdís Vilhelmína Bragadóttir
advisor